

3 JESUS' SECOND QUESTION

KEY POINTS

1. *If the statements Jesus made about himself are true, He deserves to be recognized as the Savior of the world.*
2. *If Jesus has the ability to forgive sins, He possesses an authority that is reserved for God alone.*

IN THIS LESSON YOU WILL STUDY THESE QUESTIONS:

- Who do you say that Jesus Christ is?
- Is the internal test reliable?
- What did Jesus say about himself?

WHO DO YOU SAY THAT JESUS CHRIST IS?

Let us go to the second question, “Who do YOU say that Jesus Christ is?” Before you answer that question, consider some facts that will help you make an intelligent decision.

We have to ask ourselves if there is sufficient evidence to warrant an intelligent belief in Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world. Before you finish reading these lessons, you will need to answer the question, “Who is Jesus Christ?” Many times in my own experience I have encountered mental obstacles that had to be worked through before my faith could have the intelligent foundation that God desires. If God is there and not silent,

if Jesus Christ is the answer to the needs of the human heart, God wants me to understand with my mind His plan to bring humankind into a relationship with himself. Christianity is built upon the solid foundation of knowing and being able to substantiate the claims of Jesus Christ.

Jesus made some very unique claims about himself in the New Testament. The validity of His claims are part of the internal test that verifies the reliability of the Holy Bible.

Is there sufficient evidence to warrant an intelligent belief in Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world?

IS THE INTERNAL TEST RELIABLE?

The source for the *internal test* is the Holy Bible, particularly the New Testament. The *internal test*, as stated in lesson two, looks at internal consistencies and inconsistencies within a manuscript. Some of the statements Jesus made will set the stage to look at the implications of one specific claim. This is no ordinary man we are considering.

WHAT DID JESUS SAY ABOUT HIMSELF?

When Jesus made a blind man see, He said, "I am the light of the world."²⁴

When He fed 5,000 people with two fish and five loaves of bread, He said, "I am the bread of Life."²⁵

When He was appearing before the man who would execute Him and was asked if He was the Christ, the Son of God, Jesus said, "Yes, it is as you say."²⁶

Thomas, the disciple who doubted that Jesus had really risen from the dead, responded, "My Lord and my God" when he saw Jesus and felt the wounds in His hands and side.²⁷

Jesus said, "He who has seen Me has seen the Father."²⁸

"Jesus shows us what God is like and how He will meet our needs. In Jesus we see God's love for us, His patience with us, and His provision for our salvation."²⁹

When He raised a man from the dead, He said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live even though he dies."³⁰

So Jesus' claims about himself and the uniqueness of His ministry and work are very clear.

One of the most important aspects of His claims is His right to forgive sins on earth, a claim that was reserved for God alone. The following is an account that addresses this claim:

A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, "Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?" Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and take your mat and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...." He said to the paralytic, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"³¹

Are you beginning to recognize that Jesus was more than just a good man or a great teacher? In fact, if His claim in this lesson is true, He deserves to be recognized as the Savior of the world.

A QUESTION FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION:

"If Jesus Christ has the authority and ability to forgive our sins, does this qualify Him to be accepted as the Savior of the world?"